

Doha Summit

institutions to finance projects aimed at protecting the Islamic identity of Jerusalem and enabling the Palestinians not to depend on the Israeli economy. The financial losses of the six-week-old uprising has amounted to more than \$900 million because of Israel's blockade of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The Saudi leader asserted that Jerusalem is an Islamic issue and called upon OIC states to work jointly for the success of the Islamic causes. He also called upon Russia and the United States, co-sponsors of the Middle East peace process, to shoulder their responsibility and strongly urged the parties supporting Israel to take note of its atrocities against Palestinians and said the Jewish state's aggressive acts contradicted all principles for which the US stood for. He also urged the European Union to play an active role in the peace process.

Iran's President Muhammad Khatami in a subsequent address, criticized the actions of Islamic states, whose leaders are to consider proposals for a punitive break in relations with Israel. Astonishingly while the oppressed nation of Palestine has emerged from the crucible of its struggle triumphantly, Islamic countries have yet to meet the expectations of the Ummah, he warned. The Iranian leader urged the OIC to take "resolute action" to punish Israel.

President Khatami proposed a Middle East peace plan, centred on a multi-faith state in the former Palestine that existed before the creation of Israel in 1948. He called for

return of all Palestinian refugees to Palestine' and holding a democratic referendum of the original Muslim, Jewish and Christian inhabitants to decide on a future form of government.

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, invited as an observer to the Summit, said the Palestinian dream of statehood could only be achieved through the peace process rather than violence. The past eight weeks have made abundantly clear to all sides that the cause of peace can only be damaged by excessive use of force and indiscriminate violence or terror, Annan said.

Do we achieve peace by encouraging violence, promoting hatred, and perpetuating mistrust or by fostering cooperation and dialogue? he asked in an apparent call for moderation to issue forth from the Summit.

Turning to Iraq, Annan called on Baghdad to review its position with a view to cooperating with the international community. Baghdad has rejected a UN Security Council resolution that offers a suspension of sanctions in force since Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait in return for its cooperation with a new disarmament regime.

On the Afghan conflict, the UN Chief appealed to the country's powerful neighbours Iran and Pakistan to work even more closely together toward the noble aim of achieving peace.

Envoys of both ousted President Burhanuddin Rabbani and the Taliban militia which seized power in Kabul in 1996, attended the confer-

ence but not as delegates, requesting to fill the Afghan seat left vacant for the past four years.

South African President Thabo Mbeki pointed a finger of blame at the United Nations for the conflict. "The seeming inability or reluctance to utilize the UN effectively to deal with the drawn-out Middle East conflict by ensuring that Israel complies with the resolutions of the World Body will further buttress the conviction that the UN is not allowed by some to carry out its charter responsibilities," he said, apparently referring to US support for Israel.

Mbeki, invited to speak as chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), called for the restructuring of the UN so that it reflects more correctly the realities of the world of the 21st century. The NAM and the OIC should work together and intensify our efforts to ensure the democratization of the UN as well as other political and financial global multilateral organizations, he proposed.

Twenty-six countries were represented by their heads of state, including strife-torn Somalia which was taking part in an Islamic Summit for the first time in a decade.

Doha Declaration

The world's Muslim leaders threw their weight behind the Palestinian uprising against Israel. The following are the main points of the Summit of the 56-member Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) held from November 12-14, 2000 in Doha.

Intifada

The conference invites the member states which had established relations with Israel and those which had started taking measures towards the establishment of relations with Israel within the framework of the peace process to break those relations

The Summit expressed 'its total confidence in the leadership of the Palestinians under the PLO leadership' "The conference called upon all states in the world to recognize the state of Palestine with Al-Quds (Jerusalem) as its capital upon its proclamation in the Palestinian territories and provide the Palestinians with all forms of assistance"

The organization called for severance of relations with any state that transfers its embassy to Al-Quds or recognizes the latter as the capital of Israel

The conference urged all states and bodies concerned to help the Palestinians build their national economy and consolidate their financial institutions'

It 'reaffirmed the need for Islamic-Christian action to preserve the city of Al-Quds' The conference hailed the heroic *intifada* of the Palestinian people the auspicious Al-Aqsa *intifada*

The world's Islamic leaders requested the UN Security Council to set up an international commission of inquiry to investigate the massacres perpetrated by Israel and to constitute an international criminal tribunal in conformity with international law, to indict the Israeli war criminals who have perpetrated these savage massacres'

Iraq and Kuwait

For the sake of reinforcing security peace and stability the conference called on Iraq to complete the implementation of the obligations stipulated in the relevant UN Security Council resolutions

It called on Iraq and the Security Council to engage in a comprehensive dialogue to implement such obligations in a fair and comprehensive manner and on sound bases

'The conference underscored the absence of any obstacles to the organization of flights to and from Iraq'

Islamic leaders called for the prompt resolution of the issue of Kuwaiti prisoners and missing persons as well as the nationals of other countries It also called for cooperation on the proposals made by Iraq concerning missing Iraqi nationals'

Afghanistan

The conference again emphasized the impossibility of resolving the Afghan problem by military means and called on the Afghan parties to the conflict to stop hostilities and cooperate with the aim of setting up a representative, broad-based, multi-ethnic government

It 'emphasized the importance of cooperation and coordination between the OIC and the United Nations in creating propitious conditions for achieving national reconciliation among the Afghan parties

The conference called on all states to stop immediately supplying all parties in the conflict

with arms and ammunitions It also called on Afghan citizens, and in particular Afghan farmers to take effective measures to put an end to the production and export of illegal drugs"

Chechnya

The conference called on the government of the Russian Federation to continue negotiations with the representatives of the Chechen people as soon as possible, with a view to reaching peaceful settlement to the situation in Chechnya, taking into consideration the appropriate international instruments on human rights"

Kashmir

"The conference condemned flagrant violations of human rights of Kashmir, and called on member-states to take all necessary measures to convince India to put an immediate end to these violations and enable the people of Kashmir to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination'

Kosova

The conference called on the United Nations to defend the right of Kosovars to self-determination and to protect their cultural heritage and Islamic identity

Islamic Common Market

We consider the establishment of an Islamic Common Market a long-term objective with important dimensions that necessitate continuous pursuit to implement staggered practical steps and programmes to realize that objective

MWL, London

MWL London Office Activities

(October-November, 2000)

The Muslim World League, London Office, was established in 1982. It has so far been served by five Directors: Dr Hashem Mehdi, Dr Hasan Ali Al-Ahdal, Mohammad Sindi, Abdul Hamid Waheed and Dr Bassim Abdullah Alim Mohammad Saleh Albanyan, the present Director, joined the MWL London Office in Dhul-Qa'dah, 1420 A.H., February 2000. Since he joined the Office, he has been planning various programmes in the important fields of Islamic education and Da'wah with a view to improve and upgrade the mission of disseminating the message of Islam and providing education to the young Muslim generations living in that part of the world. During the last two months, October and November 2000, specially, the MWL London Office, has organized some Islamic activities which deserve mention here.

During the above period, the Office took initiative in organizing such important Islamic activities, as



a conference to work for the Revival of UK & Eire Council of Mosques participated in the Islam Awareness Week in a big way, besides conducting regular Weekly Da'wah activities through lectures, seminars and conferences and evolving a strategy to help British new-Muslims to organize themselves, evaluate their problems and devise ways and means to solve them. In the following pages, we shall try to shed light on some of these activities.

Revival of UK & Eire Council of Mosques

A meeting of the Council of Mosques UK & Eire was held on 14 October, 2000, at 46, Goodge

Street, London W1, where the MWL office is situated. Delegates from all over England, Wales, Scotland and Republic of Ireland attended the meeting, which started with the recitation of some verses from the Holy Qur'an by brother Nuruddin.

Mohammad Saleh Albanyan, Director of the Muslim World League, London Office, then welcomed the delegates to the meeting and requested Dr Hasan Ali Al-Ahdal, the former Chairman of the UK & Eire Mosques Council to say a few words about the aims and achievements of the Council.

At the outset, Dr Ahdal explained that the UK & Eire Council of Mosques was set up in 1984

with the objectives as constitutionally adopted to promote the Islamic faith in the UK and Ireland and in particular encourage the building and maintenance of Mosques. He then enumerated some salient activities of the Council which were holding conferences on the Safety of Mosques in November 1986, Muslims' response to Education Reform Act in Cardiff, in February 1987 and a meet in London on the Role of Mosques in October 1988 besides publishing the News Bulletin, An-Nida, and a Directory of Mosques in the UK, as well as a book entitled "Muslims and Swann Report" etc.

It was decided at the meeting that the Council should resume its activities. Accordingly, an Adhoc Committee was formed with Mohammad Saleh Albanyan the Director of the Muslim World League London Office, as Chairman and Mr Mahmud Al-Rashid Deputy Secretary General of the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) as General Secretary of the Council.

The first meeting of the Adhoc Committee of the Council was convened on Saturday 11 November, 2000 at the MWL Office to consider the redrafting of the Constitution and covering the next meeting of the General Assembly of the Council. The Committee tentatively decided to invite the delegates after Hajj, 1421 AH.

Arabic Language & Islamic Studies classes

Arabic Language and Islamic Studies classes were started at the Muslim World League building, London, in 1997 with the local Muslim students. It was first started



A meeting of the UK and Eire Council of Mosques held at the MWL Office in London. (From left to right) Mohammad Albanyan Director MWL London Office, Dr Hasan Al Ahdal MWL Makkah, Choudhury Mueen Uddin former General Secretary of the Council, Mahmood Al Rahshid present General Secretary of the Ad hoc Committee.

with the children of the 5-10 age group in 1997. At the beginning there were 22 students. For one year from 1997 till the end of 1998 classes were held only on Saturdays. During the summer of 1998 teaching was imparted four days a week from Monday to Thursday from morning to 4:00 p.m. in the afternoon then every day from 10 to 2:30 p.m. But again, in winter classes were held on Saturdays.

The number of students increased from 22 in 1999 to 135 in 2000. This year from the number of students is 145 to 150. Advanced classes are held on weekdays only, on Mondays and Wednesdays, and three different classes are held on Saturdays. So far as the teaching staff is concerned, there are four teachers with experience of teaching Arabic, Maths and Physics to small children in the government schools of their home countries. Being Lebanese they are the native speakers and speak the language

fluently. In the beginning there were some teachers from Eritrea and Saudi Arabia as well.

Subjects, such as Arabic language, memorization of portions from the Qur'an and Hadith, fundamentals of Islam are taught in these classes. Abdul Hameed Daou, organizer of these classes, is an engineer by profession. He said that he thought to develop something like that in this area, where more than 20,000 Muslims were living.

Though the mosques are imparting Islamic education, those that are managed and run by Bengali Muslims teach pupils the mere reading of the Qur'an without understanding Arabic, and other essential Islamic literature," said Daou.

On his part, Daou has been teaching Arabic language and Islamic Studies at the MWL building for the last three and a half years. "Here we stress on teaching Arabic language, stressing on Qur'an memorization and explanation of

MWL, London

some of its meaning. We try to let them memorize Hadith and understand its meaning. But mostly we teach Arabic its grammar and composition,' he said. There are five students in the advanced classes for the beginners only.

Mohammad Saleh Albanyan, Director of the MWL, London Office is trying to find a centralized area to establish a network of Arabic classes, like a satellite school in each community just to educate the various age groups of children starting from five-years-old to the adult-learners. According to him, I am involved in supervising children and their studies. I am also trying to establish classrooms for children, adults and parents also. That's our intention to do in near future. Now we have just started one school as a model."

Islam Awareness Week

Islam Awareness Week was organized on 6 -12 November, 2000. It was launched with a big bang on Monday, 6th November from the House of Parliament by the leaders of the three main political parties. The launch was hosted by Lord Nazir Ahmad, Baroness Uddin and Mohammad Sarwar, MP and the guest speakers on the occasion were Jack Straw, Home Secretary, William Hague, leader of the Conservative Party, Charles Kennedy, leader of the Liberal Democrat Party, Mo Mowlam, leader of the Irish Party and Yusuf Bhailok, Secretary-General of the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB).

The Week provided a wonderful opportunity to Muslims to promote awareness of Islam amongst the wider British society and remove

prejudices that promote Islamophobia. It was a unique opportunity witnessed by a cross-section of the British society irrespective of their school of thought or group affiliation. Every Muslim was invited to come forward and join hands in practical efforts to eradicate misconceptions about Islam in people's minds.

The aim of the Week was, in a nutshell, to invite non-Muslims to the message and teaching of Islam, with wisdom and beautiful presentation. The event was packed with exhibitions, displays, presentations, seminars and workshops. Various schools, colleges, universities and libraries across the country held activities and programmes to coincide with the important event. As a part of the programmes, the Muslim World League, London Office in conjunction with WAMY organized an exhibition inviting non-Muslims to come and attend this exhibition.

The MWL London Office participated in a big way in the Islam Awareness programme. According to Mohammad Saleh Albanyan, 'The MWL attended the lectures in the House of Commons and also organized a lecture and an exhibition. It has collected names and addresses of professionals in the area, such as doctors, nurses, engineers and lawyers and invited them to come and attend the exhibition, lecture and dinner party. On the final day, there was a lecture by Brother Yakub Johnson and Prof Zaglul Najjar which was followed by a dinner party at the MWL building."

As Albanyan explained the objective of the Islam Awareness Week is to establish good re-

lations with the key figures in the community. He added that school teachers, headmasters had been invited so that they can open their school or hospital doors for us when we visit them to enlighten people there about the Message of Islam.

Da'wah Activities

Besides the above activities, there are some other important activities performed by the MWL London Office, particularly the Da'wah activities. On-going Weekly Da'wah works are continuing. Shaikh Ahmad Johani, Imam of the Saudia City, Jeddah, gave a lecture on 'Fiqh as an authentic source of Shari'ah' at the MWL building, on 27 October 2000. Dr Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips was invited from Abu Dhabi for a conference and he gave Friday Khutbah at the MWL mosque on 27 October 2000.

The MWL, London Office in conjunction with Islamic Network com held One-day Conference on 29 October, 2000 at the MWL building where Dr Abu Ameenah Brother Abdur Rahim Green and Abu Al-Yahya spoke on different aspects of Islam. The MWL London Office in cooperation with the Islamic Society of Britain organised a one-day seminar at the MWL building, on 30 October 2000, where Shaikh Wajdi Al-Gazzawi from Saudi Arabia and Dr Daud of the Palestine Research Centre, London gave lectures on Qur'an and Sunnah. Detailed reports will be followed in the second part of the MWL activities.

Dr Mozammel Haque

'British Friends of Kashmir'

Kashmiris in Britain Plan Wide-Ranging Political Action

It was recently decided at a meeting of the British Kashmiri leaders held at the House of Commons, London on 17 October 2000, to set up an organization called 'British Friends of Kashmir'

Lord Nazir Ahmad of Rotherham a Peer of the House of Lords announced this after a meeting, attended by more than 60 top British Kashmiri leaders

Opening the meeting, Lord Ahmad underscored the importance of unity among the Kashmiri leaders and the people. He said: "First of all we have to work for unity in our ranks at this crucial juncture in the history of Kashmir. Our struggle for the independence of Kashmir requires a well organized, sustained and coordinated effort in order to realize our cherished goal. There should be no rivalry among the various groups nor should there be any competition with one another. Last but not the least we should have a mechanism of accountability in our organization and should undertake a periodic assessment of what we have achieved and evaluate how far it had been effective."

The meeting had an agenda which listed the various topics for discussion like holding of party conferences, formulation of the fu-

ture strategy in the academic literary and NGOs circles, launching the Muzaffarabad-Srinagar bus service, issues related to funding and finances and convening periodically the joint meetings of Indian Pakistani and Kashmiri leaders. Each speaker was allotted five minutes to express his views on the items on the agenda.

Lord Ahmad pointed out that these days everywhere people are talking about morality and human rights. "We raised the questions of morality, human rights and nuclear war etc, but nobody listened to us. In fact our campaign has not progressed; it has gone back by ten years and we have to make efforts to regain the lost ground and work earnestly to make up for the loss. This would only be possible through a unified struggle and by shedding competition among the different parties and groups. There should be no room for demagoguery and we should always conduct stock-taking," Lord Ahmad suggested in his introductory remarks.

Setting up of "British Friends of Kashmir" Taking up this item on the agenda, Lord Ahmad mentioned the case of 'Friends of India,' which had been set up by the Indian High Commissioner two years ago to liaise with the British political parties. The group first

started working within the Labour Party. Lord Ahmad said: "Working within the Labour Party they set up a 'Friends of India' group, whose meetings have now come to be attended even by the Prime Minister and his Cabinet colleagues, where they talk about India, discuss its political strength, economic potentials and other related issues. That is what 'Friends of India' is all about."

Lord Ahmad said, "the Labour Party has a political perspective on Kashmir. If you talk about human rights, the right of self-determination, the plight of Kashmiris or of Sikhs for that matter, or raise any other similar issue, the group's support would not be forthcoming as they are 'Friends of India.' The idea to set up the pro-India group was borrowed from the earlier powerful 'Friends of Israel' lobby, whose history goes back to 1960's-70's when the latter was formed to work within the British Labour Party. Frankly, Israel and India are working very closely together on the Palestine and Kashmir issues. As is well-known, the policy perceptions of 'Friends of India' on several key foreign and domestic issues are identical to Israel and the Jewish community."

Lord Ahmad continued: "Friends of Israel' lobbies vigor-

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ously for its causes in this country. They held a meeting as recently as on 17 October, followed by similar meetings in order to put their points of view across to the parliamentarians. The Friends of India also becomes active when there is a crisis, or a problem in their parent nation. At present, according to this pro-India lobby, there is no crisis in Kashmir. But if such a crisis situation develops, they are sure to start lobbying feverishly within the concerned political parties."

After explaining the working of "Friends of Israel" and "Friends of India" groups in the British political parties, Lord Ahmad asked the participants to wholeheartedly support the formation of the "Friends of Kashmir" lobby within all political parties. He gave a spirited call to the educated Kashmiri youth to come forward and shoulder this heavy responsibility of setting up the pro-Kashmir lobby to work within the political system of Britain.

"The fight for independence, struggle for human rights, opposition to Indian atrocities — these are some common factors which unite all Kashmiris and over which there is no difference of opinion. So we have to take a common stand on these issues and demand with one voice that atrocities against our people must be stopped. But for this work, we need a band of highly educated people. Please forsake differences and unite for the sake of Kashmir and Kashmiris," Lord Nazir Ahmad appealed.

Later, it was unanimously decided that a group called "British Friends of Kashmir" will be formed in all political parties of the United

Kingdom.

Intellectual Debate Lord Ahmad, then, moved on to the next item on the agenda which was to formulate the future strategy for the Kashmir cause. Under this item, he first took up the academic aspect and said that intellectual debates on the Kashmir issue should be held in the British academic circles. "So far, we do not hold intellectual debate as there is too much bickering among Kashmiri groups. Now, the intellectual debates should start in all universities all over the country."

"We are looking for some bright young men to approach the British universities and talk to scholars and professors who can speak on the Kashmir problem. They should draw up a list of universities where we can organize lectures on Kashmir, educate our listeners on the dispute, suggest ways towards conflict resolution and highlight dangers to peace in the region," Lord Ahmad said. Later on a committee was formed with five members to do the preliminary work in this regard.

It was unanimously resolved at the meeting that intellectual debate should be held all over the United Kingdom. A committee of four people was formed to look after the editorial board to tackle this important work in the academia.

Editorial Board The meeting then moved on to the next item on the agenda which concerned planning the future strategy. Initiating the discussion on this item, Lord Ahmad said, "I personally believe that the Kashmiris, who are in Britain, are more important than those who are in India, Pakistan or inside

Kashmir. I believe you have a very important role to play and I also believe that you are the people, who can deliver. But as for the strategy, I am looking for a number of people who can write articles and letters and circulate them as samples of their work. We need a team of dedicated people who can create awareness, write effectively and circulate their writings on the subjects concerning the Kashmir issue. In short, we need an editorial board."

After this introduction by the Chair, it was unanimously agreed that Editorial Board or a literary committee should be set up to promote creative writings to project the Kashmir issue.

Contacts with International Organizations While moving on to this item, Lord Ahmad mentioned the need for lobbying within the international organizations such as the UN, Human Rights Watch, US Congress and British Parliament. He requested the members to establish contacts with the UNHCR, Amnesty International and European Union. "We should try to contact parliamentarians and other important people in those bodies and canvas support for our cause," Lord Ahmad said.

Speaking from his personal experience, Lord Ahmad explained how the people come to lobby for various causes. He asked the Kashmiris to similarly take their message on Kashmir to the people who matter. "You have got only one-item message, that is, there are human rights violations on a massive scale in Kashmir. Go out and tell the world about it. We have to be pro-active. We should act before

anything happens We must take our message across to the people who matter, Lord Ahmad stressed

It was agreed at the meeting that contacts should be established with the relevant human rights organizations, such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch Asia Watch and US Congress etc

Muzaffarabad – Srinagar Bus Service The next item on the agenda was to launch a 'Muzaffarabad – Srinagar Bus Service' While criticizing the present inertia of the Kashmiri community in Britain which does not show any active involvement in the struggle of their countrymen back home, Lord Ahmad suggested an effective way to revive the sagging spirit of the Kashmiri people His proposal was to buy a double-decker bus called the Freedom Bus, which would fly the flag of Azad Kashmir, with Muzaffarabad-Srinagar Bus Service written prominently on its sign-board This way, we shall be attracting the attention of the people in Britain and Europe to the Kashmiri cause Lord Ahmad said

Lord Ahmad expatiated on how the bus service plan should take shape "The bus service will have its inaugural run from Indian High Commission to its Pakistani counterpart Or we could launch the bus service ceremonially from the House of Lords with Kashmiris — women and children — all welcoming the bus with flags and balloons The event would be attended by Councillors, parliamentarians and local media people, who will be on hand to receive the bus The volunteers inside the bus wearing T shirts with *Free Kashmir* emblazoned on them, will hand out

hand-bills highlighting the Kashmiri struggle to the people After taking this bus around the town we shall hold lectures and talk-shows on road-corners

"Then in the following weekend, we shall take the bus to other towns, which will build up a momentum of its own This way, we shall cover outlying cities like Birmingham Nottingham, Leicester, Durby in our awareness campaign," Lord Ahmad proposed

Lord Ahmad continued, Once we have taken the bus throughout British towns and cities we should have a convoy of cars going along with this bus on its trek to important European cities like Brussels Strasbourg, Paris and Berlin preferably during summer From winter to spring this bus would remain in Britain and activities revolving around it would be held in Britain After summer we may extend this bus service to North African Muslim countries as well and even further This is still in a planning stage and I hope the proposal would very soon see the light of the day,' Lord Ahmad observed

After the introductory speech the proposal was approved by the house and it was resolved that the Muzaffarabad-Srinagar bus service would start - first from Indian High Commission going to Pakistan High Commission, or would have its launch from the House of Lords to Luton or Slough It would have on board volunteers wearing T-Shirt with *Free Kashmir* slogan embossed on them who would hand out copies of Newsletter dealing with the Kashmiri struggle

Lord Ahmad was emphatic about the great psychological im-

pact the introduction of this bus service would have on people However, for this huge effort, L30,000 was needed towards the running costs, which could be raised by organizing charity dinners and other fund-raising events He hoped that the amount could easily be collected from mosques in each town as well as by organizing charity dinner and other fund-raising events

International Conferences on UN Resolutions Coming to the proposal regarding organizing joint meetings of Indian, Pakistani and Kashmiri leaders, Lord Ahmad suggested that those have to be brainstorming session He said, "We listened to one side and now know what Pakistanis are saying We also know what Kashmiris are saying, but we have not heard what Indian Hindus are saying We should know what they are thinking on the Kashmir issue

He suggested an international conference to which five participants from each country—India, Pakistan and Kashmir—would be invited to present their points of view Five people will sit on the round table and, may be, 200 people would be there to listen to the debate which will be conducted in an orderly manner," Lord Ahmad explained

It was unanimously resolved that an international conference should be held on UN Resolutions whether they are valid or not It was also agreed that there would be a joint meeting of Indian, Pakistani and Kashmiri leaders, probably early next year

Report *Dr Mozammel Haque*

Saffron Streak

Indian Prime Minister's devious stance on building Hindu temple at the site of the razed Babri Masjid stirs national furore

India's Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's refusal to sack three ministers charged with involvement in the 1992 destruction of the mosque at Ayodhya and his preposterous claim that the entire Indian nation wants a Hindu temple built on the site strips away any pretence that he is a moderate or that India's peace and stability is safe in his hands.

He stands revealed as a naked militant Hindu nationalist, his saffron streak exposed for all to see. He clearly has supported the demolition of the mosque all the way along. His defiant backing for his indicted ministers, one of them Home Minister L. K. Advani, who is supposed to be in charge of law and order, can be taken no other way, all the more so when he justifies the mosque's demolition and construction of a temple on the site as 'an expression of national feeling'. That is a lie.

Countless millions of Indians are opposed — not just Muslims, but all who value public peace and know that an outrage has been perpetrated against a community that is as much part of India as the Hindus.

With such evidence of his deviousness, can anyone believe him when he now claims that he did not support the mosque's destruction at the time, but now that it is gone he supports the building of a temple on the site? Such twisted phraseology fools no one. His actions speak louder than his words. And by supporting his indicted ministers so defiantly, it begs the question: how much was he involved in the attack on the mosque? Did he know beforehand, and did he approve?

As for his words, they are laughable. On Thursday (7 December 2000) night he said that India's Muslims are not opposed to the erection of a Hindu temple on the site. They will be happy when it is built there, he pontificated, so long as a replacement to the Babri Masjid is built—but somewhere else.

If he believes this, he needs to see a psychiatrist. He even expects India's Muslims to help in building the temple. This is turning into a farce. And an insulting farce at that. Making it even worse, he made his remarks, which were a clear endorsement of militant Hindu nationalists, at an *Iftar* party thrown by a Muslim minister. Vajpayee evidently hopes to goad the Muslim community at this sensitive time. Does he seriously expect them to help build his temple? Or perhaps he imagines that he can force them into becoming subcontinental Uncle Toms, willing to carry out the most humiliating tasks to please their bigoted masters. Whichever, his contempt for India's Muslims shows no bounds. That was one of his favoured solutions. The other is for the court's decision to go in favour of building the temple at the site. He did not say what would happen in case the decision was not in favour. We can guess. His party would build it, with military giving it full protection.

The Indian opposition demands an apology. That is not enough. In any other country, where political integrity is valued, ministers indicted on such serious crimes are forced to resign, if only so as not to bring the government into disrepute while the legal process takes its course.

India's democracy still has its admirers around the world, but the refusal by the three to resign and by Vajpayee to let them go seriously undermines not just his government's integrity but that of India as a whole. For the sake of the country's honour, they should go, if not he should dismiss them. Far more dangerous, however, are the consequences of Vajpayee's words within India. They risk inflaming communal violence. It is gross irresponsibility.

Arab News, Jeddah, 9 December, 2000

Men vis-a-vis Women in Islam

Biology Is A Key Determinant

In this age of fancy slogans such as women's lib equality of sexes and gender justice, a lot of questions have been raised with regard to the status of women in Islam. Critics have often cited a different dress code for Muslim women differential sharing of inheritance for male and female offspring and some provisions of Islamic family law in proof of the alleged inferior status of Muslim women.

A discussion on rights and duties of Muslim men as well as women will be quite in order to compare their relative positions within the Islamic society and the law. The status of Muslim women has been discussed here with reference to the Holy Qur'an the word of Allah and Hadith the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him). These are the basic sources of Islamic guidance as well as law.

At the outset it will be ap-

propriate to clarify that Islam recognizes the biological differences between men and women and assigns them different roles in life while making them partners in the family. Whether other faiths and systems accept it or not the biology does cause differences in practice. It is why women invariably everywhere are kept away from the armed forces and combat roles and it is the men who fight at the front line. Women are at best recruited for auxiliary services such as nursing the wounded. Women are almost absent from transport sector. Even in a very developed country like America of the 26 million truckers who traversed the US highways in 1989 only 11000 were women.

Women are not preferred for jobs that involve working during nights. Thailand and the Philippines have banned female masseurs in massage parlours. Laws are enacted against eve-teasing not Adam-teasing. And even in the developed West women outnumber

men in jobs or professions related to caring nursing or teaching while few women are surgeons masons and undertakers. These differences essentially speak of vulnerability of women in different roles.

Islam takes a special cognizance of the biological and physical differences and assigns them specific roles. In doing so Islam merely recognizes the fact that equality does not mean being same. This essentially reflects in Islam maintaining some difference in rights and duties of the men and women in the society. While women gain an upper hand in some sectors the men are duly compensated in other fields. Here we take a look at the women's status in various fields.

On spiritual plain

The Glorious Qur'an recognizes equality of men and women on spiritual plain. It says

Those who perform deeds of righteousness be they male or

Feature

female have faith they will enter heaven and not the least in justice be done to them (Qur'an 4:14)

** The believers men and women are protectors of one another they enjoin what is just and forbid what is evil they observe regular prayers practise regular charity and obey Allah and His Apostle On them Allah will shower His mercy (9:7)*

** Revere the wombs that bore you (4:1)*

** From what is left by parents and those nearest related there is a share for women whether the property be small or large a determinate share (4:7)*

** Lo! Men who surrender unto Allah and women who surrender and men who believe and women who believe and men who obey and women who obey and men who speak the truth and women who speak the truth and men who persevere (in righteousness) and women who persevere and men who are humble and women who are humble and men who fast and women who fast and men who guard their modesty and women who guard their modesty, and men who remember Allah and women who remember Allah Allah has prepared for them forgiveness and vast reward (33:35)*

The Hadith equally lauds the women's role in the society and the family. The Noble Prophet (peace be on him) said

● Women are not an agent of devil but are termed *Muhsanah*

Islam's women are free to retain their parental family names. Nowhere does Islam enjoin them to walk behind their men or eat after the menfolk have finished. Islam encourages widow remarriage; provides for honourable dissolution of inharmonious marriages without the albatross of lifelong alimony. At the same time, it disapproves breaking of the marital bonds to protect the family integrity. It places the children in male custody as a balancing mechanism for the sake of bringing rapprochement of soured relationships.

a fortress against satan

● A wife is not a subordinate or Mrs Somebody but an equal partner, an individual in her own right

● A Muslim who is kind to his daughters, brings them up and educates them without showing any partiality towards them and accords them a place of dignity shall guarantee for himself a place in the heaven

● Mother enjoys an exalted place and is described as one underneath whose feet lies the heaven

● A man is adjudged on the scale of virtue according to how he treats his wife. The Noble Prophet (peace be on him) said the best among you is the one who is the best towards his wife

While the Bible in its present form holds Eve guilty of misleading Adam to commit the sin in the heaven and consequently the

entire womanhood was cursed to suffer with monthly menses, the Qur'anic narration doesn't single her out for the sin. Both are held guilty and it is attributed to the human nature rather than feminine nature. Both of them sought pardon and they were addressed jointly

On economic front

It is perhaps here that Islam places the main burden of family economy on males and frees the women from such burden to devote attention to upbringing of children. The men are the providers for the family and are entrusted with the task of maintaining wife and children. Though women are not barred from working, the responsibility towards maintaining them and their children lies with the husband even if they work. Any financial contribution from her is totally voluntary.

In such circumstances if Islam allows her only half the share of inheritance, she actually stands to be

it an advantage i.e. securing financial assets without any liabilities. It was the dawn of industrial age and consumerist movement that brought out women into the market.

And this could be achieved only by degrading motherhood. As a consequence while women lost the supreme position within homes they were assigned subordinate and inferior role in the economic sector. More regretfully women ended up putting in more work-hours at work-places as well as the household duties. So today the Western women undergo double torture.

In marriage

Muslim woman's right to choose her spouse is inalienable. She cannot be married away without her consent. She is entitled to a dower (*Mahr*)—a substantial amount to be decided mutually. The money or assets thus secured are hers without any claim from anyone else (Qur'an 4:4). She has the right to seek *Khula* (separation) (4:128). If anyone questions her chastity such individuals are liable for severe punishment and are disqualified from standing witness (24:4). If she wishes to work or be self-supporting and participate in handling family responsibilities she is free to assume this role provided her honour and integrity are safeguarded.

The Qur'an enjoins the men to be kind and humane towards women. Islam of course permits polygamy for men but under several conditions. Islam prefers all the individuals to get married and raise families in order that no valid reason remains for sexual licentious-

ness and virtues thrive in the society. And only in such a society temptations will find no victims.

Dress code

Islam prescribes *Hijab* for women and prefers for her quiet life within her home. In doing so Islam does not relegate her to a secondary status, but accords her a supreme role within the family whereas men have been given economic responsibility outside their homes. It is here that her prayers within her home carry a degree of preference over those in mosques. This however does not apply if the women intend to seek higher education and scholarship. They are free to pursue higher learning within *Hijab*.

Hijab protects them from evil gazes. The Western culture degrades them by promoting their sex-symbol image. *Hijab* removes the possibility for men to ogle and demands that they view women as people rather than objects. Their beauty is not sacrificed at the altar of commercialization and consumerism. It is safely kept behind their veils and is exclusively for their husbands. Didn't the West assign them an inferior status by selling their physical charms as air hostesses, receptionists, film heroines, striptease artistes, telephone operators, sales girls etc.

Do not look at culture in Muslim lands

This should however not detract us from admitting that women in Muslim lands are free individuals. While Islam may be ideal its practitioners may be far

from being so. Muslim women may be repressed by the culture practised in their lands. For instance in India it *Mahr* (dower) or where inheritance is denied to Muslim women or they are victims of dowry extortion or if they are unfairly divorced or not maintained or in the Arab countries if their marriages are delayed by their parents in pursuit of higher and higher offers of dower, or in Kuwait they are denied voting rights it has nothing to do with Islam.

Islam's women are free to retain their parental family names. Nowhere does Islam enjoin them to walk behind their men or eat after the menfolk have finished. Islam encourages widow remarriage, provides for honourable dissolution of inharmonious marriages without the albatross of lifelong alimony. At the same time it disapproves breaking of the marital bonds to protect the family integrity. It places the children in male custody as a balancing mechanism for the sake of bringing rapprochement of soured relationships.

In recognition of biological urges of man it makes marriage nearly obligatory and totally discourages celibacy. It enjoins married couples to raise children to apply further glue to the bonds of love in a relationship. It enjoins punishment for sex outside marriage and thereby saves women from stigmatization and ensures a society where sexuality blossoms within fixed social parameters and leads to recognized bonds and mutual respect and affection.

Maqbool Ahmad Snaj

Battle of Badr

THE GREAT BATTLE OF BADR-II

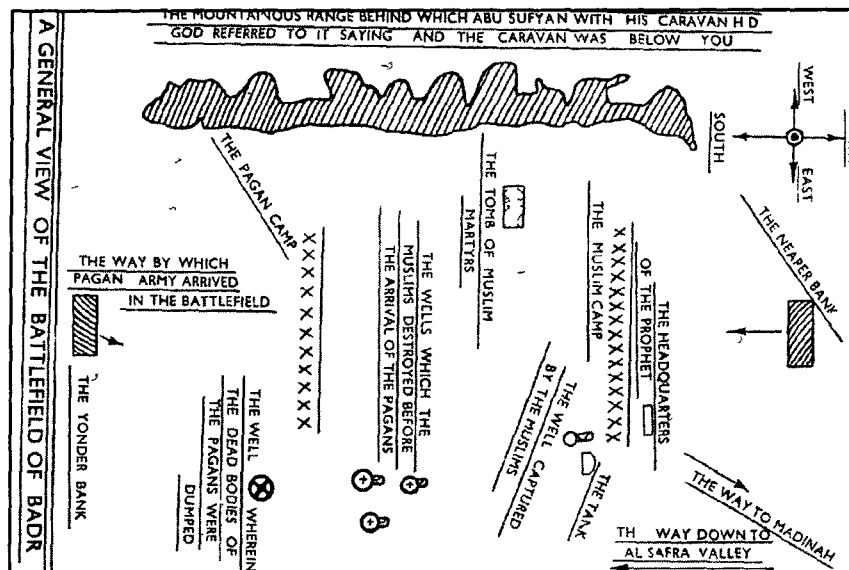
The Noble Prophet (peace be on him) was pleased when he became sure that both the groups in his army sincerely wished to fight against the forces of polytheism and were fully prepared for it. He immediately issued orders to his army to march on toward Badr saying "March on and be the recipients of the happy tidings, for verily Allah has promised me one of the two parties, (i.e., either the capture of the caravan or a victory over Abu Jahl's army). Lo! I am seeing the field where they are destined to perish." Thus, the Muslim army marched on towards the well of Badr.

The Prophet as Supreme Planner

In this battle the Noble Prophet (peace be on him) set forth some of the most magnificent examples as a commander — unassuming but fully alive to his duty!

The Noble Prophet (peace be on him), three leaders of the Emigrants, Ali Ibn Abi Talib, Zubair Ibn Al-Awwam and Sa'd Ibn Abi Waqqas and a few other Companions, who went right up to the well of Badr to watch the movements of the enemy.

The patrol captured two Qu



raysh boys near the well and brought them to their camp where the Prophet himself interrogated them and obtained the information he wanted about the enemy. The Prophet questioned the two boys about the position of the Makkan army and was told that it was encamped beyond the sand dune on the other end of the valley. Then he asked them "What is their strength?" They said "There are many men over there." "How many?" again enquired the Prophet.

"We don't know," they replied.

"How many camels do they slaughter each day?"

"Nine one day and ten the next

day" they told him.

Hearing this the Noble Prophet (peace be on him) turned toward his Companions and told them that the strength of the Makkan army was between 900 and 1000. Resuming the interrogation he questioned the boys about the chiefs who were commanding the Makkan army. They told him that Utbah Ibn Rabi'ah, his brother, Shaibah, Abu Jahl, Abul Bakhtari Ibn Hisham, Omayyah Ibn Khalaf Al-Abbas, Ibn Abdul Muttalib, Suhail Ibn Amr, Nabiyah and Munabbah, the sons of Al-Hajjah, were commanding the Makkan army. Thus when the Prophet (peace be on

him) had confirmed his information about the strength of the enemy force he turned towards the commanders of his army and said Makkah has thrown up before you her very precious treasures

On the sixteenth day in the month of Ramadhan in the second year after Hijrah the Noble Prophet (peace be on him) moved forward with his army to the well of Badr to capture it before the Makkahns reached there. During this movement an incident took place that showed how the Prophet consulted his Companions in such matters and sometimes even went by their advice. The Noble Prophet (peace be on him) was with his army encamped at the well of Badr when one of the commanders Al Hubab Ibn Al-Mundhir Al-Ansari expressed the view that from the military point of view the place was unsuitable for the encampment. He asked the Noble Prophet if he had selected the place on his own or that was chosen for them by Allah so that they could neither change it nor could suggest any other place. The Noble Prophet (peace be on him) told him that he had selected the place on his own in view of its strategic importance and significance.

At this Al Hubab said Messenger of Allah this is not a suitable place for encampment. You should rather march on with the army to capture the source of the water supply that is nearest to the enemy camp. There we shall stay, destroy all other wells and then dig a tank around that well and collect all the water there. Then shall we fight our enemies and have enough water to drink while our enemies shall have no water."

Espionage Activities of the Enemy

Having encamped on the other end of the valley the Quraysh sent their agents in order to gather information about the position and strength of the Muslim army. A group was led by Ibn Omair Ibn Wahb who returned to the Makkah army to tell them that the army led by Muhammad had over three hundred men. Then he rode back to the rear of the Muslim army to see if there was any reserve force stationed there to reinforce the Muslim army in its hour of need but went back convinced that there was no such force there.

Second Split in Makkah Ranks

On hearing the leader of the scouting mission Omair Ibn Wahb speak in this vein, a fresh wave of opposition against Abu Jahl arose demanding the return of the Quraysh army to Makkah without fighting. This time the opposition was far stronger than it was on the first occasion when Al-Akhnas Ibn Shuraiq opposed Abu Jahl at Rabigh and then he and his allies Banu Zuhrah, left the army and went back to Makkah. The fresh opposition was led by Utbah Ibn Rabi'ah, the chief of Banu Abd Shams and was supported by Hakim Ibn Hazm. It came to the surface a day or two before the Battle of Badr. The leaders of opposition were against any armed confrontation with the Madinan army and demanded an immediate return to Makkah.

Hakim Ibn Hazm approached various leaders present in the Makkah army to enlist their support. He

went to Utbah Ibn Rabi'ah Al-Umawi (who was the first man killed in the Battle of Badr) and said "O father of Al-Walid you are the chief of the Quraysh and their leader whom they obey. Wouldn't you like to do such a good deed which you would forever be remembered and revered?" He asked "What is that good (you speak of)?" Hakim said "It is that you return to Makkah with your army and take upon yourself the payment of blood-money for the death of your ally Amir Ibn Al-Hadhrani."

Utbah replied "I have already tried that and may you be my witness that as he was my ally, I take upon myself the payment of his blood money and solemnly undertake to make good the loss of his family. Then Utbah advised Hakim to bring Abu Jahl round to his view point for he had by now established himself as the self styled commander of the Makkah army and was sure to oppose any such move as a challenge to his authority."

Utbah spoke to the army and strongly suggested a return to Makkah instead of fighting the Muslims. He said "O the people of Quraysh by God if you fought Muhammad and his Companions and harmed them in any way you will forever be divided among yourselves because of killing one another tied in blood relationship. I advise you to go back and let Muhammad be dealt with by others. If they defeat him your purpose will be served. And he emerged victorious you might then join him and make peace with him."

It was this attitude of Utbah that drew the following remark from the Noble Prophet when he saw the

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Makkan army If there is any good in these people there shall be a man with a red camel among them If they listen to him they will be guided aright The rider of the red camel alluded to was Utbah Ibn Rabi'ah who made this last noble attempt at peace

But the moment Abu Jahl heard of Utbah Ibn Rabi'ah's call for peace he flared up He charged Utbah with cowardice and said that he did not want to fight as he was afraid that his son (Abu Hudhaifa the famous companion) might be killed in the battle Then turning towards Hakim Ibn Hazam, the emissary that Utbah sent to him, he said By God, his (Utbah's) lungs swelled when he beheld Muhammad and his companions By God, we will not go back until He settles the issue between us and Muhammad Utbah says this because he knows that Muhammad and his Companions including his son who is with them, shall perish (in this battle) It is to save his son that he demoralizes you and others saying that there should be no fighting

Of all the enemies of Islam and the Muslims Abu Jahl was the most trenchant one He had been seething with rage ever since the Noble Prophet's migration from Makkah It was he who had in the Makkan assembly proposed the assassination of the Prophet That is why considering the relative strength of the two armies, an immediate armed clash between the two, in his opinion, offered a golden opportunity to destroy Muslims and Islamic movement

Abu Jahl reprimanded and strongly censured the two chiefs

(Utbah and Hakim) of the revolt against his leadership and vehemently opposed their call for peace However he realized that his army might be weakened by a still another split if he did not act immediately and promptly That is why on hearing the proposal of a peaceful march back to Makkah he sent for Amir Ibn Al-Hadhrani whose brother had been killed by the Muslims during the expedition of Abdullah Ibn Jahsh and asked him to provoke the Makkans to take revenge from the Muslims for killing their ally

Abu Jahl is reported to have told Ibn Al-Hadhrani O the son of Al-Hadhrani, here is Utbah Ibn Rabi'ah who wants the army to go back when your enemy is standing just before you Arise and adjure them in revenge of your brother's death The arrogant Quraysh chief had rightly guessed Ibn Al-Hadhrani was tempted by the Satan Standing up before the Makkan army he was invoking vengeance for the death of his brother

This cry had an immediate effect the Makkans were carried away by their passions and plunged headlong into the battle Abu Jahl succeeded in frustrating the efforts of the pacifists the wise and the prudent men of his army Even they were dragged into the battle His obstinacy made the clash inevitable The leader of the latest revolt Utbah Ibn Rabi'ah came out fully armed and ready to fight Addressing Abu Jahl he was heard saying Very shortly it will be known who is a coward!

After encamping at the place suggested by Al-Hubab Ibn Al-Mundhir, the leader of the Ansar,

Sa'd Ibn Mu'adh suggested to the Prophet that a hut should be built for him from where he could guide the army As an emergency precaution and as a safeguard in the event of a setback the Ansar chief proposed furthermore that this tent of the Prophet be erected at a safe place from where he might return to Madinah, in case the Muslims should suffer a defeat

The Noble Prophet (peace be on him) liked the suggestion and a hut was accordingly built at a suitable place on a raised ground in the north-east of the battle-field fashioned with branches of palms A select group of young Ansar with Sa'd Ibn Mu'adh at their head, was picked to guard the Prophet and his tent

Abu Jahl's Prayer Before the Battle

The Quraysh were by this time fully prepared for the attack Again Abu Jahl stepped forward and urged them to destroy the Muslims Ibn Ishaq has recorded that a short time before the battle Abu Jahl prayed to God saying O God destroy him who has severed blood relations and who preaches a heretic and strange message May he perish on the morrow!"

When leaving Makkah for Badr the Makkans held the covering of the Ka'bah by their palms and prayed "O God! May the people who amongst us are better-guided superior in force more honoured and possess a better religion win against their adversaries!" Their prayer was answered they were defeated and the Noble Prophet emerged victorious The Qur'anic

verse *If you people sought a judgement now has the judgement come unto you* refers to this very prayer of the Quraysh

The Noble Prophet's Address

The Noble Prophet (peace be on him) addressing the Muslims a little before the battle, exhorted them to fight saying By Allah in whose hands is the soul of Muhammad if everyone of you who fights the enemy today and is killed while persevering in battle and facing the enemy and not turning his back will most certainly have paradise for reward'

On this occasion unprecedented instances of unshakeable faith were noticed—the faith that made the Muslims surmount all hardships and difficulties. Omair Ibn Al Hammam of Banu Salamah stood in the ranks of the Muslim army and was eating the dates he had in his hand. But when he heard the speech of the Prophet he threw down the dates saying 'Nothing intervenes between me and paradise but that I should go and kill the men over there (i.e. unbelievers) and drawing out his sword he fell upon the pagans till he was overpowered and killed

The Prophet Offers His Person for Requital

While examining the Muslim army and straightening their battle lines the Noble Prophet passed by Sawwad Ibn Ghaziya who was not in line. The Prophet prodded him with a stick he was holding in his hand and said 'Fall in line O Sawwad!' At this Sawwad protested to the Prophet saying 'You hurt me O Messenger of Allah and Allah

has sent you with truth and justice and demanded a compensation from him

Hearing this the Prophet offered his person for the requital without a moment's hesitation. He uncovered his body before Sawwad saying 'Take your revenge and strike me as I struck you. But instead of striking him in requital Sawwad started kissing the Prophet's body. The Prophet said 'Sawwad what made you do this?' He said 'O Messenger of Allah as you know the battle is imminent. So in the last hours of my life I wanted my body to rub against that of yours!' At this the Prophet fell pleased and prayed for him

When the Prophet was sure that the Muslims were properly lined up for the battle, he issued orders that they should not be the first to start fighting. Furthermore he said 'If you are encircled then fight them with your arrows.' Then accompanied by his trusted companion Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq he went back to his hut

Thenceforth the situation gradually heated up and the two armies advanced to meet each other. Naturally the Noble Prophet was the most anxious person knowing fully well that on the outcome of the battle hung the fate of the Muslims and their creed. The Muslims' defeat would have meant irreversible defeat for Islam and its forces. He knelt down imploring his Lord thus 'O Allah should this small group of the Muslims perish there would be none left to worship Thee on earth

Al-Aswad Ibn Abd Al Asad Al Makhzumi a mischievous and con-

temptible man was the first to be killed from among the Makkani army. He had sworn to drink from the well that was captured by the Muslims, destroy it or die in his attempt. Leaving his ranks he moved slowly but full of rage and threatening towards the well to destroy it. Hamzah Ibn Abdul Muttalib intercepted him before he could reach the tank and chopped off one of his legs with a stroke of his sword. But such was his persistence and obstinacy that even after the loss of a leg he kept on crawling towards the tank to fulfil his promise and had nearly reached, when Hamzah swooped upon him with yet another stroke and finished him off. His death, the first at Badr, was the fuse that sparked the battle

First of all three of the best Quraysh warriors and of the same family came forward to challenge the Muslims to single combat. They were Shaibah Ibn Rabi'ah, Utbah Ibn Rabi'ah and his son Al Walid Ibn Utbah. They belonged to the tribe of Abd Manaf, the great-great-grandfather of the Noble Prophet. The three men paused between the two armies and challenged the Muslims to single combat whereupon three young Ansar — Auf and Muawwidh (sons of Afra), and Hamzah Ibn Abdul Muttalib Ibn Hashim Ibn Abd Manaf and Abdullah Ibn Rawahah went forward and volunteered to fight the duel. But when the three challengers saw that they were confronted with the Ansar they praised them saying that they were of noble blood and their equals but refused to fight against them. For they said they wanted their peers from among their own people. At

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this the three Ansar returned without a fight

A Family Perishes in the Battle

When the Prophet was informed of what the Quraysh warriors wanted he ordered three Quraysh Muslims of Banı Abd Manaf clan, Hamzah Ibn Abdul Muttalib Obaidah Ibn Al-Harith and Ali Ibn Abi Talib to go and fight their blood relations from the opposite side. The three immediately went forward. The Quraysh warriors enquired of them about their family and expressed satisfaction saying 'Yes, you are our equals and come of a noble family.'

Then the single combats started, each of the combatants choosing his own counterpart. Al-Walid challenged Ali (they were the youngest combatants). Obaidah fought against Shaibah and Hamzah against Utbah. Ali killed his opponent (Al-Walid) in no time. So did Hamzah finish off Utbah. But Obaidah (the eldest one) and Shaibah dealt at each other fatal blows. Shaibah died on the spot and Obaidah was brought back by Ali and Hamzah to the Muslim camp with his thigh wounded and bleeding. Shortly afterwards he breathed his last with his head at the feet of the Noble Prophet and saying, 'O Messenger of Allah, if Abu Talib were alive and had seen me in this condition he would have found me the true picture of his verse

And we guard him and guarding him fall dead beside him caring neither for our sons nor our wives

This single combat was an ominous beginning for the Makkans,

as thereby they lost three of their best warriors and commanders in the very first phase of the battle. It was indeed a very serious blow to the Makkan army. Greatly enraged they attacked the Muslims with all their strength. They rained arrows on Muslim ranks then rushed forward to meet them brandishing their swords.

The Muslims held their ground and waited for the Makkan army where they were, as they were ordered by the Prophet not to attack until ordered to do so and shoot arrows only if encircled by the enemy. This wise order of the Prophet was the principal factor that greatly strengthened the Muslims and weakened the enemy.

Retaining their defensive positions the Muslims waited till the furious offensive launched by the Quraysh was on the wane. They attacked in successive waves and suffered serious losses in both men and material but were unable to break the Muslim lines. When the enemy had spent up its force the Muslim army was ordered to launch a counter attack. It was a sweeping and swift counter attack which widened the sphere of the battle. The Muslim army carried away with them the Makkan units. The battle raged furiously and the Noble Prophet viewed his brave soldiers and their commanders from his hut with a mixed feeling of hope and anxiety.

Al Bukhari has reported that while the battle raged with full fury, the Noble Prophet implored his Lord in these words 'O Allah, fulfil Your promise and word! O Allah should this small group of ours perish there would be none

left to worship You! ' Abu Bakr who was with the Prophet in his hut held him by his hand and said 'Messenger of Allah! Allah has listened to your prayer (And He will fulfil His promise)''

Ibn Ishaq says And (then) the Prophet fell asleep in his hut and (after a short nap) he got up and said to Abu Bakr 'Be of good cheer Allah's help has come. There is Gabriel leading his horse through the dust-cloud.' The angels undoubtedly participated in this battle in order to lend spiritual strength to the Muslims as pointed out in the Qur'an.

When you sought the help of your Lord and He answered you (saying) 'I will help you with a thousand of the angels rank on rank Allah appointed it only as good tidings and that your hearts thereby might be at rest Victory comes only by the help of Allah Lo! Allah is Mighty Wise' (Qur'an 8:9-10)

From this it is evident that the angels did not take part in the actual fighting. They came down simply to strengthen the Muslims spiritually. The Qur'anic verse 'Allah appointed it only as good tidings and that your hearts thereby might be at rest' refers to the same conclusion.

The Prophet in the Thick of Battle

During the battle the Prophet was seen in the very thick of it. Surrounded by his guards and other Companions he led the Muslims to the thick of the battle where they finished off all who came their way. He fought gallantly in the front ranks reciting the Qur'an.

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verse The hosts will all be routed and will turn away and flee Nay but the Hour (of Doom) is then appointed nyst and the Hour will be more wretched and more bitter (than then earthly failure) (Qur an 54 45-46)

After a fierce and dreadful battle the Quraysh army broke up and fled helter-skelter before the Muslims. Their resistance had crumbled like a house of cards. Fear seized them towards the end of the battle and then the general flight of the Makkian army ensued. The Muslims chased them, killing or taking them prisoner. When the Noble Prophet saw the forces of oppression and unbelief breaking up he called aloud "Disfigured be the faces (of the disbelievers)!"

Abu Jahl's Persistence and Hatred

Abu Jahl tried to rally his forces when he perceived they were breaking up and were about to crumble down. He shouted out to them — a cry of hatred, mischief and arrogance. "Fight on bravely. By Lat and Uzza we shall not return till we have settled the issue with Muhammad and his Companions in these hills." Abu Jahl tried to give a good fight with a small band; he sought to play the last card rather than throw away the game. But before the increasing pressure of the Muslim army he was helpless and failed miserably in preventing the general flight of the Makkans. Now they were totally disorganized and were already in full flight with the Muslims pursuing them with shouts of "Allah is one. Allah is one!"

It was Mu adh Ibn Amr Al

Ansari who killed Abu Jahl. He found Abu Jahl heavily guarded by a group of fighters, who had formed an umbrella of spears over him. But Mu adh waited for his opportunity. He had it at last when he found a number of fighters around him dead, leaving him unguarded. He pounced upon him like a hawk and with a single stroke of his sword cut off one of his legs and threw him down on the ground in a pool of blood.

Ikrimah, Abu Jahl's son who was beside him, struck Mu adh on his shoulder and cut off his arm. The brave Muslim, however, still fought on with the other hand and lived to the reign of the Third Caliph, Othman. But the panic-stricken army fled, leaving Abu Jahl to his fate. A short while after this Muawwidh Ibn Atrah passed by him and transfixed him with his lance. Shortly after this he died.

Thus were the forces of paganism being annihilated; their commanders were separated from their troops and all were fleeing like wild gazelles scared by a hunter. This is how the Quraysh tasted the bitter fruits of Abu Jahl's folly and arrogance in the form of a shameful defeat of their forces — a defeat the parallel of which had never been witnessed before. They were completely routed, leaving seventy men killed and seventy prisoners in the hands of the Muslims.

Among the Quraysh captured by the Muslims there were some who belonged to the tribe of Banu Hashim, who had not joined battle of their own accord but were forced into fighting the Muslims. The most prominent among these Hashimite prisoners was Abbas Ibn

Abdul Muttalib, uncle of the Noble Prophet. Regarding these men of Banu Hashim, the Prophet had ordered the Muslims before the battle not to kill any one of them. He is reported to have said: "I know that some men of Banu Hashim and some others have been forcibly drawn into this battle. Therefore don't kill them, if you meet them in the battle. Similarly don't kill Abul Bakhtar, Ibn Hisham, if you meet him on the battlefield."

The Son Kills Father

Abu Hudhaifa Ibn Utbah Ibn Rabi'ah, a soldier of the Muslim army, on hearing this order of the Prophet, broke down saying: "Are we to kill our fathers, brothers and relations and spare Abbas?" By Allah, I will strike him with my sword if he came my way. "Utbah Ibn Rabi'ah, Abu Hudhaifa's father, Shaibah, his uncle and Al-Walid, his cousin, were the first to be killed by the Muslims in this battle."

When the Noble Prophet heard about Abu Hudhaifa's remarks, he in the presence of Omar Ibn Al-Khattab, said to him: "Abu Hudhaifa! Will you raise your hands against the uncle of Allah's Apostle?" Omar asked the Prophet to allow him to kill Abu Hudhaifa as he had proved himself to be a hypocrite by these utterances. But the Prophet did not allow anyone to hurt him. Abu Hudhaifa repented ever afterwards at the words he uttered on this occasion and used to say: "I never felt at ease afterwards. Martyrdom alone may obliterate this spot."

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Gratitude for A Non-Muslim's Kindness

The orders of the Noble Prophet were fully carried out. None of the Hashimites in the pagan army was killed by the Muslims. They were however taken prisoner, chained and along with other prisoners taken to Madinah, as the Prophet did not forbid this.

Abul Bakhtari Ibn Hisham was the only non-Hashimite, who was ordered by the Prophet to be spared. It was a gesture of gratitude for his help and magnanimity he had shown towards Islam and the Muslims during the trying times of persecution in Makkah before the Prophet emigrated to Madinah. He was the most prominent of those few chiefs of Makkah, who opposed and finally succeeded in annulling the socio-economic boycott imposed by the Quraysh against Banu Hashim and Banu Al-Muttalib by tearing the deed of the boycott. It was for this noble act and as a gesture of gratefulness due to him that the Noble Prophet ordered the Muslims not to take his life.

Notwithstanding the orders of the Prophet, the noble-hearted Abul Bakhtari chose to fight and consequently fell down fighting. Al-Majdhar Al-Balivi met him during the battle and told him before one of his friends that the Prophet had ordered the Muslims not to kill him. At this he said, 'And my (this) comrade-in-arms? (Has his life also been spared?)'. Al-Majdhar told him that the orders concerned him alone and none else. His comrade could not be allowed to go scot-free. At this, Abul Bakhtari declined the offer saying, "Then he and I shall die together." And he

fell on Al-Majdhar reciting the couplet

The son of a free woman never forsakes his comrade until he falls dead or finds a way out of the difficulty.' Al-Majdhar was thus compelled to fight him and in the end to kill him.

When the battle ended, the Noble Prophet ordered the Muslims to collect all the booty and weapons they had seized from their enemies. They were also ordered to look around and report back to him about Abu Jahl's fate. To facilitate the search, he told the Muslims that they could recognize his body by a distinct mark of a wound on his knee which was reminiscent of a quarrel between him and the Prophet in their childhood. Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud, one of the searchers, found Abu Jahl, wounded and dying. Drawing closer, he put one of his feet on his neck to cut off his head and said to him:

O enemy of Allah! See how Allah has made you low.' "How has He made me low?" retorted Abu Jahl and then added, "Was there ever before a nobler man killed by you? Tell me who won the battle today?"

Ibn Mas'ud told him that it was Allah, His Prophet and the Muslims who had won the day. Thereupon, Abu Jahl said to Ibn Mas'ud who was bent over his chest to cut off his head, "O you the tender of sheep, you have climbed a very difficult and high ascent!" The reference was to Ibn Mas'ud's tending sheep in Makkah.

Ibn Mas'ud cut off Abu Jahl's head and placing it before the Prophet said, 'This is the head of Allah's enemy, Abu Jahl Ibn Hisham'.

And the Prophet said: Praise be to Allah Who has disgraced you, O the enemy of Allah! He was the Pharaoh of this people (the Quraysh).

The Dead in the Well and Prisoners in Chains

After the Muslims had collected the spoils and booty of the battle and chained the prisoners, the Prophet ordered to haul the dead bodies of the pagans into a nearby deserted well. All the Companions stood and watched with the Prophet the dead being thrown into the well.

Ibn Ishaq has recorded that after all the dead bodies were dumped down into the well, the Prophet went there and said, "O you people of the well! Have you found your Lord's word true? I have found true all that was promised by my Lord to me."

In another tradition he is reported to have said, "O you people of the well, you were indeed very bad relations of mine. You belied while others believed in me; you drove me away (from my hometown), while others gave me shelter and you fought against me while others helped me."

The Companions standing by wondered and said to the Noble Prophet, "Are you talking to the dead (who can neither hear nor speak)?" To this he replied, "They have indeed found their Lord's promise true!" Ayesha, the wife of the Noble Prophet, said, "The people think he (the Noble Prophet) said, 'They (the dead) heard what he said to them'."

(Concluded)

Muhammad Ahmad Bashmail

Animal Rights:

An Islamic Perspective-III

The author undertakes a philosophical and scientific discussion on some of the key issues of animal rights in the light of the Qur'anic concept of human stewardship and the status of animals in the Divine scheme. After a critical evaluation of the contemporary topics such as vivisection and criticism against Halal method of slaughter, the paper throws light on the wider ramifications of various arguments showing the rationale behind the Islamic approach of moderation in this field.

The Attitude of Moderation

Britain's recent outbreak of mad cow disease (Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy) has brought a long standing fact of animal husbandry to the fore. Some scientists devised feeding dairy and beef cattle with rudiments of meat products which included dried blood, crushed bone, ground up intestines, spinal cords, brains and other intestinal organs such as pancreas, trachea and kidneys, disregarding the fact that those animals were herbivorous and not carnivorous. The purpose was to accelerate animal growth and in-

crease profitability. This drastic change in the feeding habit was proven to be the reason behind the mad cow disease.

The Qur'an clearly forbids eating the meat of animals found dead (cf 2:173, 6:145, 16:115) and as logically follows, not to feed animals from which we directly get food items with other animals found dead. It also follows, that no animal which itself eats blood of other animals may be eaten. Muslims are ordered not to eat carnivorous animals like lion, tiger, dog, eagle etc.

The Qur'an also subtly indicates that cattle are vegetarians (cf

16:10, 80:27-32, 79:31-33, 32:27). Muslims have been aware of the division of animals viz. carnivorous and herbivorous and of having been asked to feed and encourage the natural foods like grass, plants and vegetables to all cattle and poultry as they are herbivorous. But human greed innovated unnatural methods which resulted in the havoc.

There are two extreme views on the status of animals. In the first concept, animals are just *unfeeling automata*. The second concept is better summarized by eco-feminist Anne Primavesi. She suggests that we should not claim God's love as exclusive for human, but should

Feature

resoul nature allowing the non-humans same rights before God that humans have¹

In the middle ages, cows, sheep and cats were treated for such crimes as stubbornness, damage to property lack of respect etc by hanging, flogging and whipping. It is the *unfeeling automata* concept which has driven animals and birds to extinction by reckless killing for the fun of hunting. Food requirements for an animal's body are limited, but the sky is the limit for a poacher's greed.

The ancient thinkers held that animals were mere living tools without any higher faculties. But the Qur'an recognizes the higher status of animals by referring to them as communities like human beings (cf 6:38). It even tells about the communication in animals (cf 27:18). The Qur'an permits to take non-vegetarian food (cf 5:1, 16:5, 23:21). Eating animal's meat is not always bad for man.

Fish-eaters suffer no more heart disease than vegetarians. A now famous ten-year study of 2000 Greenland Eskimos, who subsisted mainly on fish and wild marine mammals, reported not a single heart attack. There are even reports about a mental illness that comes from dietary inadequacy caused by long-term vegetarian habits (cf Leslie Bernstein, *Discover* February 2000 P 31-32).

Like pure carnivores man lacks enzymes to make the amino-acid taurine which is plentiful in meat. By comparison, herbivores have high levels of other herbivore enzymes, including those for converting beta caroten into Vitamin A, and lengthening 18-carbon fatty

acid from plants into the 20 and 22-carbon fatty acids that animals need. Even the structure of our gut differs slightly from the other great apes. Man has a shorter colon and longer small intestine more like a carnivore. Humans have flat teeth as well as pointed teeth suited to become an omnivorous being.

An ethical vegetarian should not wear leather shoes or use belts or watch-straps, foot balls, cricket balls and baseballs. If it is unethical to kill animals, then one should not eat foods that contain even the smallest proportion of animal tissues which include foods with gelatin from bones such as jellies and sweets, cheese made with rennet, and lecithin in chocolates. Also eating and drinking milk present moral problems for the ethical vegetarians.

In the Vedic religion, the eating of beef, previously countenanced, is later prohibited. But the Brahmins of Bengal and Kashmir still are non-vegetarians. In the *Mahabharata* as Nehru points out in his *The Discovery of India* there are references to beef or veal being offered to honoured guests. References to animal sacrifice are found in the Rig Veda (Rig 1:22:6-7).

We should fall neither into the trap of treating animals as though they are essentially the same as human beings nor consider them as mere *automata* and over exploit them. The moral justification for experimentation on animals requires a belief that there is a fundamental difference between animals and humans. There is a varying degree of life and degrees of consciousness in them. Even in the amoeba there is a centre of activity

of curiosity of exploration of planning, there is an explorer the animal mind.² Any animal that is hunted for food is being exploited in a relative sense.

Also any domesticated animal that is farmed for milk, wool or slaughter is being exploited. But humans were given such a right under *Khilafah* (cf Qur'an 16:4-8). As a vicegerent of God he is in an exalted position and at the same time, a humble servant, as the agent to execute the will of God on earth. Only that moderation should be there (cf Qur'an 6:141, 17:29, 7:3).

Animals have got the same characteristics of appetite like humans and therefore, as husband-man, man should supply their natural wants. They should be routinely provided with food protection from predators and precarious diseases. Unnecessary suffering should be avoided in any way. Failure to do so is seen by Islam as cruelty towards domesticated animals.

Is the Status of Humans and Animals at Par?

Any sharp distinction between humans and animals, Peter Singer dismisses as Speciesism which he says is as indefensible as the most blatant racism.³ Tom Regan argues that since man instinctively considers mentally-deranged people as humans, so he ought to equally value higher animals. 'It is not true that such humans – the retarded child for example and mentally deranged – have less inherent value than you or I'.⁴

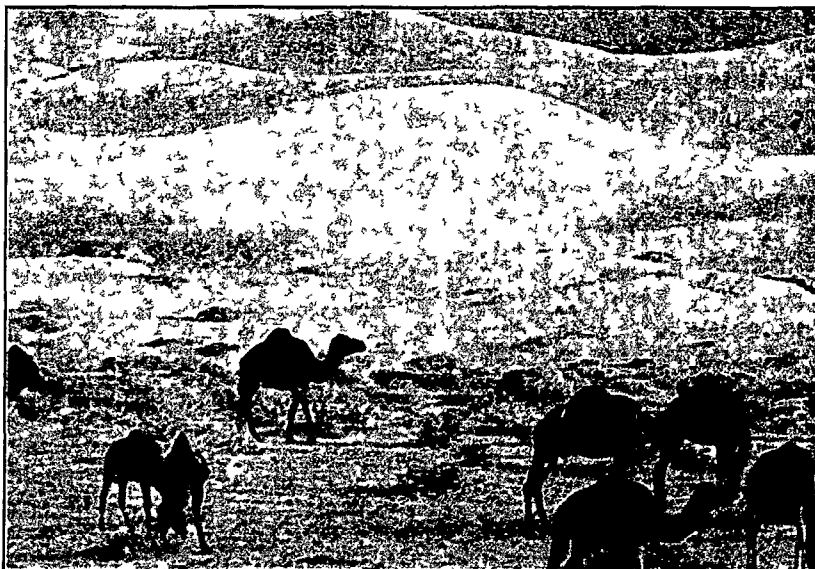
Animal rights activists go on to argue that 'We (men) have no extra

standing in the world.⁵ Their literature is full of statements made of their refusal to draw any sharp distinction between animal and man. Since great apes, gorillas, chimps and orang-utans appear to have consciousness or self-awareness like humans, so the argument goes, man ought to include them in the moral sphere. They point out that the chimp's DNA is 98.4% the same as humans.

New Scientist (11 February, 1993 P 3) has pointed out the fallacy of this argument: thus, this misses the point: genomes are not cake recipes. A few tiny changes in a handful of genes controlling the development of the cortex could easily have a disproportionate impact. A creature that shares 98.4% of its DNA with humans is not 98.4% human, any more than a fish that shares, say, 40% of its DNA with us is 40% human. Even a 1.6% difference still represents huge amounts of information (something like 150 large books).

New Scientist (15 May 1999 P 26-30) says that the small difference clearly counts for a lot. It gives us the ability 'to read magazines and sing along with the car radio while chimps are climbing trees and fishing for termites with twigs. Humans speak and write language, think complicated thoughts, can remember the past and project themselves into the future, have imagination, enjoy planning and seeing themselves as parts of the universe. They are self-conscious and other-conscious in ways that no other animals are.

Despite the superficial similarities of anatomy (based up on a common plan of economy in the



Animals should be provided with food, protection from predators and precarious diseases.

Mind of the Planner) and physiology (based upon the common needs of mammals in atmospheric breathing, digestion, defecation, reproduction) man is in a class apart—both physically and mentally. Compare the most beautiful bird songs with a Beethoven (1770-1827) Symphony.

The bird's best efforts are always the same. Spiders build unique but constant webs; they seldom vary. But man has original ideas; he can create new things and does so constantly. Tim Ingold of Dept. of Social Anthropology, Manchester University, has pointed out the beaver (which constructs dams) *does not* and *cannot* construct an imaginary blue-print of his future accommodation where this is something of which even the most primitive human is capable.⁶

The naturalistic biologist of Harvard University, Simpson, argued that good and evil, right and wrong, concepts irrelevant in nature except from the human

viewpoint became real and pressing features of the whole cosmos as viewed by man—the only possible way in which the cosmos can be viewed morally because morals arise only in man.⁷ According to Koestler (1905-83), the emergence of symbol language, first spoken, and then written, represents the sharpest break between animals and man.⁸ Biologist Dobzhansky (1900-1975) gives this important distinction to human being. Man is the only living species who feels an ultimate concern. Man is aware of himself; he can objectify himself and his own action.⁹ As Bertrand Russell (1873-1970) had plainly stated: Animals are happy so long as they have health and enough to eat.¹⁰ But man feels fear, anxiety, and death awareness.

Qur'anically speaking, the human's special attribute of being created in the image of God (cf. 15:29, 40:64, 64:3) is reflected not alone in speech but in such matters as personality, will, God-consciousness, and morality. Animals

lack the capacity for moral agency. Man alone experiences a sense of guilt when he does wrong. Being a moral agent means being able to choose between right and wrong and being able to act on that choice.

As Albert Camus (1913-1960) mentioned, an animal does not revolt against his animal fate. Only man, as the only animal who refuses to be so, revolts. Humans are trustees responsible to God for the care of their fellow creatures (cf Qur'an 2:30, 6:165). Since man possesses a differentiating element of the Divine spirit (cf Qur'an 38:71-72), his animal passions will not come in the way if they can manage to bring them under their control. In a sense, animal instincts are the human's essential assets and contribute to his growth when properly regulated.

Among the innumerable creations, man is the noblest. God has created him as superior to Angels (*Malaikah*) even as they prostrated before him (cf 2:34). In scientific parlance, the energy of intelligence in man is superior in form to those of the energy endowed to Angels (cf 32:9). Angels' prostration to man (cf 2:34) implied the superiority of the human over the angelic. God has exalted man from many of His creations (cf 17:70). He was created in the noblest image (cf 9:4). According to the Qur'an, the origin of language and scripts is divine and every human being has a spark of the divine in him (cf 32:9, 96:4, 68:4, 55:4, 15:26-29). The human soul is bearer of human dignity and the responsibility.

As the bearer of a great responsibility (*Amanah*), we have

been gifted with the intellect to probe into the mysteries of the universe (cf 33:72). He has to answer and give account before his Creator (cf 17:36). This means that humans are created with intellect, volition, emotion, conscience, art, language, creativity, and with both a capacity and a responsibility for making moral and spiritual choices. Man can be moral only because he is rational. Mankind was honoured above all creations by God breathing into him the Divine spirit which, if used properly, elevates him above all creations (cf 15:26-30).

Man can make of himself a cultural being in distinction to the animal which is created by its environment or heredity. Man, alone of the living things, has shown himself capable of knowledge required to give him a certain mastery over his environment, clearly, an ontological leap among the animal kingdom. Indicating the distinctive features of man over animals, Bertrand Russell writes: there is no evidence that they (animals) possess anything analogous to narrative. We may say therefore without exaggeration, that language is a human prerogative, and probably the chief habit in which we are superior to the "dumb" animals.¹¹

Unlike men, animals are simply in the world, incapable of objectifying either themselves or the world. They live a life without time, submerged in life with no possibility of emerging from it, adjusted and adhering to reality. Man is not only a being that knows, but also a being that knows he knows. As the great Islamic scholar Al-Ghazzali (1058-1111) writes, 'the distinguishing quality of

knowledge lifts him (man) up to the celestial world.'¹²

Conclusion

The Qur'an is primarily a scripture of guidance, and not a book of any physical or social sciences. It provides broad guidelines concerning the spiritual and material aspects of life. Modern animal rights activists should perhaps, take a leaf out of the Qur'an's outline for the goal of a society which is marked by greater compassion for every living thing, as the Qur'an speaks of the sanctity of life (cf 6:38). The primary significance of Islam is in the making of peace (cf Qur'an 8:61, 19:62, 39:58 (Q 25:2, 126)). A Muslim is the one who has submitted to the decrees of God and has made peace with His creations. His primary duty is to promote what is right and to prevent what is wrong (*Al Amr bil Maroof wan-Nahy an Al Munkar*) (cf 7:157).

God has honored man with authority over the creatures (cf 2:29). As the trustee of God on earth, he should make proper use of them. The Muslim must strive to know the animal world in order to preserve, maintain and sustain it as God's representative on earth. Animals, in direct relation to man, should be intended to be used only for specific purposes such as provision of food, labour, transport. They are not meant to be used by man for his entertainment as, for instance, when animals are set against each other in sport.

While using them for his service, he should not unnecessarily hurt or harm them. To catch birds and imprison them in cages without

any special purpose is considered abominable Islam is also against cruel methods of factory farming and fox hunting Any destruction of animal life simply for the vanity of wealthy ladies is abhorrent to Islam Although the plants and animals are created for the benefit of mankind the sacrifice of their lives is subject to the condition laid down by the Qur'an (*The true servant of the Merciful are those who do not slay such life which Allah has made sacred except for just cause* (25 68))

No Muslim could condone the clubbing of baby seals, for example or the hunting of beautiful animals to extinction for their fur, or horn, or tusks All living things are the result of Divine work and as such should be treated as a sacred trust entrusted to man for the sake of his own ability also for him to know God and His immutable principles and qualities manifested through them A true believer in the unity of God will show deep respect for His entire creation If nature is red in tooth and claw it is for humans to oppose nature in the name of goodness and love

Until recently the world could not even imagine that animals could be deserving of mercy and affection More than a thousand years before any societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals were established Islam made kindness to animals a part of faith and cruelty to them a sufficient reason for a person to be thrown into the Hell With guidance of the Divine revelation in almost every sphere of human activity and with minute details of Prophet Muhammad's noble life and practice recorded in history to serve as beacon light for

posterity the function of prophethood had its final expression

The Qur'anic position as of anything is in the middle One extreme view insists that men have no moral obligation whatsoever to non-humans Even idle torture of them is not morally wrong because of any alleged moral rights non-humans possess such actions might even be a cruelty towards fellow humans The position of people like Albert Schweitzer (1875-1965) and Peter Singer is equally unacceptable The claim that all life is sacred and those animals have inviolable rights strike us as being impossible

I do not think that even those who make such claim can in practice at least, accept them As a practising physician pathogenic micro-organisms were not sacred even to Albert Schweitzer, and defenders of animal rights do not claim such rights for lice and tape-worms Almost everybody's attitude towards fleas, ticks and cockroaches are the same

The Humane Society of America's Statement reproduced below¹³ does reflect a hidden Islamic attitude

It is wrong to kill animals needlessly or for entertainment or to cause animals pain or torment It is wrong to fail to provide adequate food, shelter and care for animals for which man has accepted the responsibility It is wrong to use animals for medical educational or commercial experimentation or research unless absolute necessity can be demonstrated and unless such is done without causing the animal pain or tor-

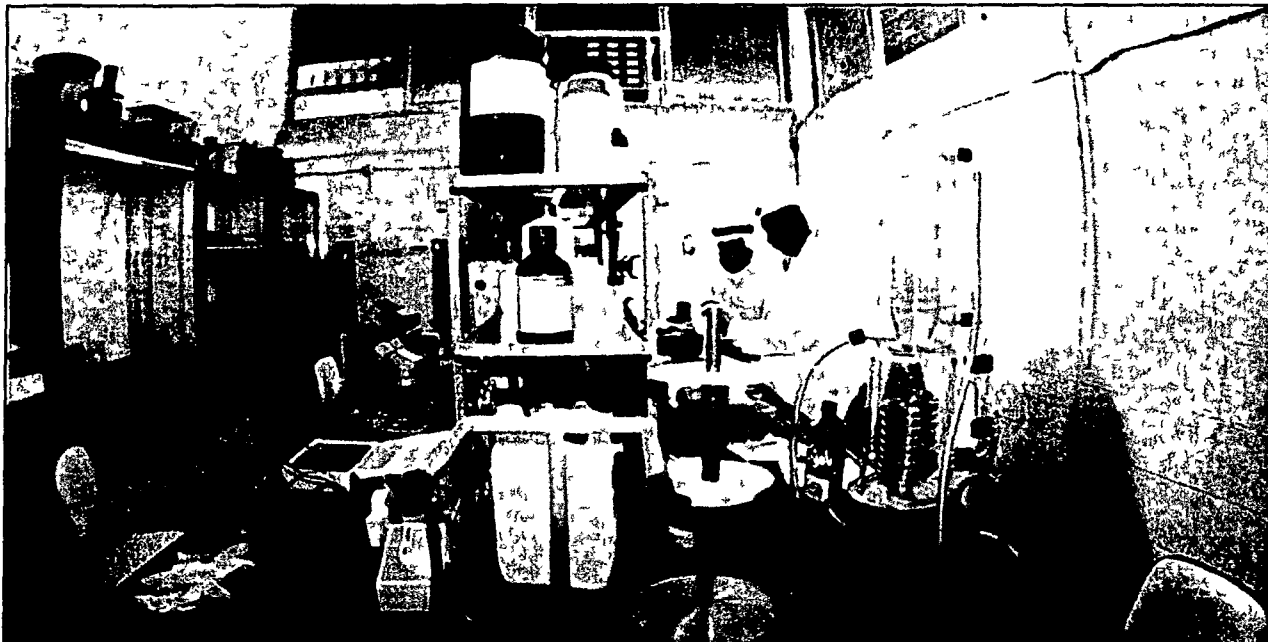
ment It is wrong to maintain animals that are to be used for food in a manner that causes discomfort or denies them opportunity to develop and live in conditions that are reasonably natural for them

'It is wrong for those who eat animals to kill them in any manner that does not result in instantaneous unconsciousness Methods employed should cause no more than minimum apprehension It is wrong to confine animals for display in poundment or as pets in condition that are not comfortable and appropriate

The animal is to be slaughtered in such a way as to minimize its pain, and draw the blood out of the meat to eat flesh with blood is an abomination Unnatural or cruel methods of farming which deprive livestock of all enjoyment of life are forbidden in Islam, such as keeping them in cramped and dark condition forcibly feeding them unnatural foodstuffs in order to increase their fat content, and making them grow unnaturally and quickly so that their natural life is unreasonably shortened are all un-Islamic The Islamic method of slaughter is based on necessity and is thoroughly hygienic

It is ethically wrong to see animals as worthless life-forms which can be mistreated at will and which have no ecological space of their own We must not forget that without animal experimentation by Koch (1843-1910), Pasteur, Lister and Edward Jenner, one would never have learned about how living organisms work how blood circulates how drugs act, how dis-

Feature



A veterinary laboratory in Makkah entrusted with the task to conduct tests on samples taken from the animal flesh slaughtered in the Holy City in order to ensure that the meat for consumption is free from all diseases

eases get cured. It is one thing to manufacture life-saving remedies derived from animal serum, and quite another to make mice capriciously suffer in order to test cosmetics for eye irritation. In the field of education, there has been unnecessary replication of demonstrations involving considerable suffering; there would seem to be scope for use of filmed demonstrations.

The Muslim scientist must respect animals as created beings and not merely as 'laboratory tools'. They have an ethical obligation to ensure that the research aims cannot be achieved in other ways. Whether the product is worth the animal suffering, which it engenders, is a matter to be decided by society at large, but if substances are to be produced for human use, it is necessary that they should be tested.

As moral beings, man should

not even countenance suffering on the part of animals except when it subserves a clearly defined higher purpose, such as saving of precious life. In general, animal experimentation should take place when and where there are no real alternatives. The triad of reduction, refinement, and replacement in animal procedures should be an integral part of any scientific research project to help minimize animal use and suffering.

(Concluded)

V A Muhammad Ashrof

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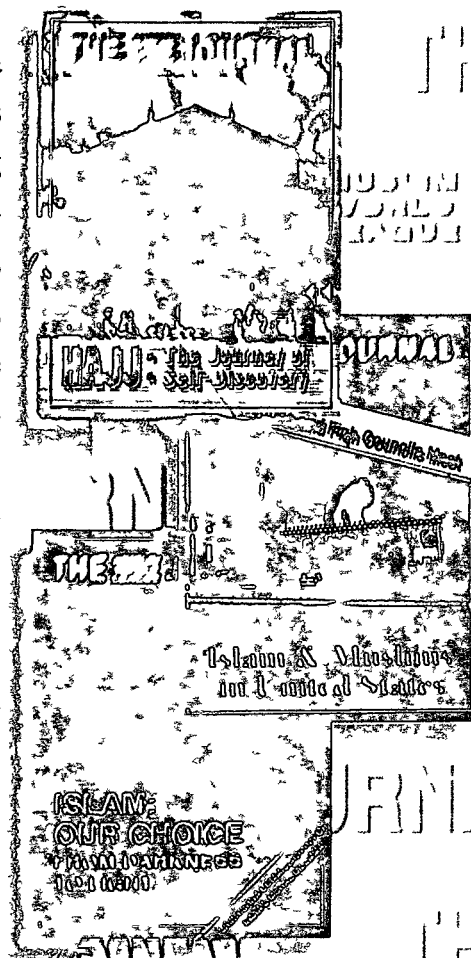
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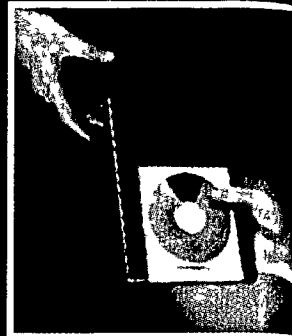
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